A Finding Aid to the Clay Spohn Papers, circa 1862-1985, bulk 1890-1985, in the Archives of American Art

Jean Fitzgerald

1998
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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Clay Spohn papers
Date: circa 1862-1985
(bulk 1890-1985)
Identifier: AAA.spohclay
Creator: Spohn, Clay Edgar, 1898-1977
Extent: 20.4 Linear feet
Language: English
Summary: The Clay Spohn papers measure 20.4 linear feet and date from circa 1862 to 1985 with the bulk of the material dating from 1890 to 1985. The collection consists of biographical material, correspondence, business records, notes and writings, art work, printed material, and photographs which reflect the life and career of painter and educator Clay Spohn.

Administrative Information

Provenance
The material on reel D169 was lent for filming by Clay Spohn in 1964. The material on reel 5461-5474 was donated by Spohn's friend and the executor of his estate, Urban Neininger, in 1978. An additional 0.4 linear feet of papers were donated by Spohn's biographer, David Beasley, in 2008.

Separated Materials
The Archives of American Art also holds material lent for microfilming (D169) including sketchbooks, writings, correspondence, and related material. Lent materials were returned to the lender and are described in the first series of the finding aid.

Alternative Forms Available
Portions of the collection and materials lent for microfilming are available on 35mm microfilm reels D169, and 5461-5474 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of the collection as described in this finding aid does not reflect the order of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information
Part 2 of the collection was processed by Jean Fitzgerald in 1998. The finding aid to Parts 1 and 2 was written by Jean Fitzgerald in 1998. A small addition was accessioned in 2008 and minimally processed in 2017.

Preferred Citation
Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research. Use of unfilmed material requires an appointment.

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Biographical Note

Clay Edgar Spohn was born November 24, 1898, in San Francisco, to Lena (Schaefer) and John Henry Spohn. From 1919 to 1921, Spohn studied at the University of California at Berkeley, and from 1922 to 1924, he studied at the Art Students League in New York under Kenneth Hayes Miller, Boardman Robinson, George Luks and Guy Pene Du Bois. He also became acquainted with Alexander Calder at the Art Students League. In 1924, Spohn was employed as an assistant designer to muralist Ezra Winter. From 1926 to 1927 he studied in Paris at the Académie Moderne, a school run by Fernand Leger and Orthon Fireze.

Returning to San Francisco in 1927, Spohn became an active member in the Bay Area art scene. The Treasury Department commissioned him, in 1938, to execute a mural for the Montebello, California post office, and in 1939, he completed another mural under the sponsorship of the WPA for Los Gatos Union High School in Los Gatos, California.

In 1942, the San Francisco Museum of Art mounted Spohn's solo exhibition "Fantastic War Machines and Guerargraphs", consisting of a series of drawings inspired by dreams of World War II. From 1945 until his resignation in 1950, Spohn was employed as instructor of drawing and painting at the California School of Fine Arts, where he befriended Clyfford Still and Mark Rothko. In 1949, at the California School, he organized a group exhibition entitled "The Museum of Unknown and Little Known Objects", in which Spohn's extraordinarily-constructed objects were a focal point.

Spohn moved to Taos, New Mexico in 1952, and participated in several national exhibitions. He was Visiting Lecturer at Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, in 1958, after which he moved to New York City where he executed a series of paintings under the sponsorship of the collector J. Patrick Lannan. From 1964 to 1969, he taught at the School of Visual Arts in New York.

After a two year move to Taos, Spohn returned to New York in 1971. In 1974, the Oakland Museum sponsored a retrospective of Spohn's work.

Clay Spohn died in New York City on December 19, 1977.

Scope and Content Note

The Clay Spohn papers measure 20.4 linear feet and date from circa 1862 to 1985 with the bulk of the material dating from 1890 to 1985. The collection consists of biographical material, correspondence, business records, notes and writings, artwork, printed material, and photographs reflecting the life and career of painter and educator Clay Spohn.

Part 1 includes sketchbooks with annotated drawings by Spohn, writings including reminiscences by Spohn, letters, clippings, and photographs of Spohn's artwork.

Part 2 includes biographical material; correspondence between Spohn and his colleagues; business records such as Spohn's general accounting records; Spohn's notes and writings on a variety of subjects; drawings
and sketchbooks; printed material such as exhibition announcements and catalogs; and photographs of subjects such as Spohn, his family and colleagues, his house, and his artwork.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into three parts. Part 1 was lent to the Archives of American Art in 1964 by Clay Spohn, and was microfilmed and returned to Spohn. Part 2 was donated to the Archives of American Art by Urban Neininger in 1978 and was partially microfilmed. Because material from part 2 was not processed until over three decades after filming Part 1, the overall organization is inconsistent. In general, material within folders is arranged chronologically.

Missing Title:
• Part 1: Clay Spohn Papers, 1926-1963
• Part 2: Clay Spohn Papers, circa 1862-1985 (boxes 1-22, OV 23, 19.9 linear ft.)
• Part 3: Addition to the Clay Spohn Papers, 1958-1977 (box 24; 0.4 linear ft.)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

  Painting, Abstract -- France -- Paris
  Painting, Modern -- 20th century -- New York (State) -- New York

Types of Materials:

  Account books
  Ambrotypes
  Drawings
  Photographs
  Sketchbooks

Names:

  Calder, Alexander, 1898-1976
  Corbett, Edward, 1919-
  Corbett, Rosamond Walling Tirana, 1910-1999
  Fryworth, Teressa, 1906-1981
  McChesney, Mary Fuller
  Neininger, Urban
  Reynal, Jeanne, 1903-
  Ribak, Louis, 1902-1979
  Rothko, Mark, 1903-1970
  School of Visual Arts (New York, N.Y.)
  Sievan, Maurice
  Sihvonen, Oli, 1921-
  Still, Clyfford, 1904-
  University of California, San Francisco. School of Fine Arts
Container Listing

Series 1: Clay Spohn Papers (Microfilm), 1926-1963, undated

Arrangement:

• 1.1: Sketchbooks, 1926-1927
• 1.2: Writings, 1963
• 1.3: Correspondence and Related Material, 1939-1954, undated

1.1: Sketchbooks, 1926-1927

Scope and Contents:
The three sketchbooks found here contain notes and annotated drawings made by Spohn during his stay in Paris. Sketchbook I contains a drawing of Hemingway's friend, Musgrave, at Le Dome, schematic drawings for a "portable studio," and notes about what to take to Giverny. Sketchbook II contains a self-portrait drawing and one drawing each of Musgrave and Duff Twisden, Hemingway's model for "Brett" in The Sun Also Rises, with whom Spohn became acquainted in the cafes of Paris. Sketchbook III contains designs for chairs and notes giving advice on art.

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1.2: Writings, 1963

Scope and Contents:
Writings consist of Spohn's reminiscences in the form of a 100-page letter to sculptor and art historian Mary Fuller McChesney. He answers questions about his career and describes, with words and drawings, his works for the exhibition The Museum of Unknown and Little Known Objects at the California School of Fine Arts in 1949.

| Reel D169 | Writings (entitled "Reminiscences" on microfilm), 1963 |

1.3: Correspondence and Related Material, 1939-1954, undated

Scope and Contents:
Found here is a letter from Reginald Vaughn discussing the acquisition of Spohn's Los Gatos mural for the Morrison Center for Rehabilitation, a letter from the W.P.A. office concerning exhibitions, and three clippings. Also found are twelve photographs of artwork (primarily Spohn's murals) including: the mural The Legend of New Almaden; mural for a post office in Montebello, California; a mural for Castro Valley community center; a mural Fireman Save My Child for Volunteer Fire Department in Carmel, California; scale drawings of Benimino Bufano's proposed statue for Twin Peaks, San Francisco; and the lithograph Greek Legend.

| Reel D169 | Letter from Reginald Vaughn, 1954 |
| Reel D169 | Photographs of Work Executed Between, 1936-1939, undated |
| Reel D169 | Letter from W.P.A., 1939 |
Reel D169  Clippings, 1936-1941
Series 2: Clay Spohn Papers, circa 1862-1985, undated

(boxes 1-22, OV 23, 19.9 linear ft.)

Arrangement:
- 2.1: Biographical Material, 1892-circa 1978 (box 1, 0.3 linear feet)
- 2.2: Correspondence, 1925-1981, undated (boxes 2-5, 4.7 linear feet)
- 2.3: Business Records, 1890-1983 (boxes 6-7, 1.6 linear ft.)
- 2.4: Notes and Writings, 1924-1985 (boxes 7-18, 10.8 linear ft.)
- 2.5: Artwork, 1926-1968, undated (box 18, sol 22, OV 23, 0.6 linear ft.)
- 2.6: Printed Material, 1894-1977, undated (boxes 18-19, 1.5 linear ft.)
- 2.7: Photographs, circa 1862-1977, undated (boxes 20-21, 0.5 linear ft.)
- 2.8: Artifacts, undated (box 21, 1 folder)

2.1: Biographical Material, 1892-circa 1978

(box 1, 0.3 linear feet)

Scope and Contents:
Biographical material includes a variety of official documentation for Spohn and his parents. Documents concerning Spohn's parents include their marriage license. Documents concerning Spohn include his baptismal certificate, passport, the contents of two wallets, membership and identity cards, biographical sketches, two wills, and Spohn's death certificate. There is also a typescript biography of Spohn, "Life of a Painter," by David R. Beasley.

Available Formats:
Biographical materials are on reel 5461.

| Box 1, Folder 1 | Documents Concerning Spohn's parents, 1892-1916 |
| Box 1 | Documents Concerning Clay Spohn |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | Baptismal Certificate, 1898 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Naval Discharge Papers, 1918 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Passport and Identity Card for Travel in France, 1925-1926 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Contents of Wallet 1, 1941-1953 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Contents of Wallet 2, 1966-1977 |
| Box 1, Folder 7 | Membership Cards, 1951-1966 |
| Box 1, Folder 8 | Miscellaneous Identity Cards, 1958-1965 |
| Box 1, Folder 9-11 | Biographical Sketches and Résumés, 1932-1971 |
| Box 1, Folder 12 | Spohn's Medical History, 1964 |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Wills, 1950-1969 |
| Box 1, Folder 14 | Death Certificate, 1977 |
2.2: Correspondence, 1925-1981, undated

(boxes 2-5, 4.7 linear feet)

Scope and Contents: Correspondence is between Spohn and his colleagues, including two letters from Alexander Calder, eight letters from Mark Rothko, and twenty-eight letters from Clyfford Still.

See Appendix for an alphabetical list of correspondents from Series 2.2.

Appendix:

Alphabetical List of Correspondents in 2.2:

- Abingdon Square Painters: 1958 (1 letter)
- Addison Gallery of American Art: 1958 (2 letters)
- American Artists' Congress: 1938 (1 letter)
- American Library of Color Slides: 1941 (1 letter)
- Archives of American Art: 1964 (4 letters)
- Art Academy of Cincinnati: 1958-1959 (3 letters)
- Art Association of Newport: 1958 (1 letter)
- Art Career School: 1958 (1 letter)
- Artists Equity Association: 1950 (1 letter)
- Arts and Architecture: 1963 (1 letter)
- Art Students League: 1958-1964 (2 letters)
- Art Times: 1959 (1 letter)
- Art Workshop of the Rivington Neighborhood Association, Inc.: 1958 (1 letter)
- Ashton, Dore: 1969 (1 letter)
- Ayer, Phyllis: 1956 (1 letter)
- Bachels, Andrew: 1969 (1 letter)
- Barnett, Rici: 1973 (1 letter)
- Barron, John N.: 1966 (1 letter)
- Beasley, David and Viola: 1963-1978 (11 letters)
- Bender: Albert M. Bender Memorial Trust: 1947-1951 (2 letters)
- Bethers, Peggy: 1940 (1 letter)
- Blesh, Rudi: 1960 (1 letter)
- Board of Education, City of New York: 1958-1965 (2 letters)
- Booth, James W. (family friend): 1943-1956 (7 letters)
- Borgenight: Grace Borgenight Gallery, Inc.: 1965 (1 letter)
- Boru, Sorcha: 1932-1933 (12 letters)
- Brandenburg, Helen: 1970 (1 letter)
- Braunstein/Quay Gallery: 1977 (1 letter)
- Briggs, Ernie: 1967-1977 (2 letters)
- Bright, Beatrice: 1971-1973 (2 letters)
- Brock, Midu: 1954 (1 letter)
- Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture: 1966 (1 letter)
- Brown, Lesley: 1955 (1 letter)
- Burke, Bob: 1971 (1 letter)
- Burnham, Janet B.: 1950 (1 letter)
- Bute, Janey: 1971 (1 letter)
- Calcagno, Lawrence: 1969-1977 (5 letters)
- California Palace of the Legion of Honor: 1964 (1 letter)
• California School of Fine Arts: 1955-1964 (2 letters)
• California: University of California at Berkeley: 1940 (1 letter)
• California: University of California at Santa Clara: 1975-1976 (2 letters)
• Carewe, Sylvia: 1969 (1 letter)
• Carr, James F.: 1967 (1 letter)
• Chase Manhattan Bank: 1971 (2 letters)
• Chisholm, Stuart (landscape architect): 1925 (1 letter)
• Clayton, Janice: undated and 1965-1974 (6 letters)
• Clifton, Jim and Mary (owners of a Spohn painting): 1956 (1 letter)
• College Art Association: 1949 (1 letter)
• Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center: 1952-1970 (4 letters)
• Cooke, Regina: 1955 (1 letter)
• Cooley, Anne: 1941 (1 letter)
• Corbett, Ed and Steff, and Rosamond Tirana: undated and 1951-1977(47 letters, including a 1962 wedding announcement for Corbett and Tirana, and a letter dated Mar 21, 1963 enclosing a photograph of Ed with an amputated foot)
• Craig, Jeanne: 1963 (2 letters)
• Crawford, Jane and Ernie: 1958 (3 letters)
• Crehan, Hub and Anne: 1960 (1 letter)
• Crewe, Sylvia: 1969 (1 letter)
• Crews, Judson and Mildred (publishers of poetry magazine in Taos): 1952-1969 (4 letters)
• Cumming, Ann (and Jennifer Sutcliffe): 1956 (1 letter)
• Cunningham, Ben: 1950 (1 letter)
• D'Arcangelo, Allan and Sylvia: 1965 (1 letter)
• Dasburg, Andrew: 1961 (1 letter)
• DePuy, John: 1964 (1 letter)
• Diebenkorn, Richard: 1951 (1 letter)
• Dilexi Gallery (L. James Newman): 1965 (1 letter)
• Dixon, Budd (J.B.) and Peggy: 1954-1970 (5 letters)
• Dowell-Kahl Gallery (Leone Kahl, director): 1963 (1 letter)
• Drumm, Steve: 1953 (1 letter)
• Durham, Charlotte: 1968-1970 (3 letters)
• D'Vorzon, Berenice and Randal Goya: 1965 (1 letter)
• East Hampton Gallery: undated (1 letter)
• Edwards, Tom L.: 1945-1974 (2 letters)
• Egri, Ted and Kit: 1958-1971
• Elster, Grace-Marion: 1926 (1 letter)
• Ely, Georgette and Wolcott: 1958-1969 (38 letters)
• Finichel, Lilly: 1954 (1 letter)
• Forster, Bertrand Dixon: 1961 (1 letter)
• Forster, Paul and Else: undated and 1943-1974 (15 letters)
• Fort Worth Art Center Museum: 1971 (1 letter)
• Foss, Florence: 1958 (1 letter)
• Fran, Ford: 1971 (1 letter)
• Fryworth, Teressa (Terry) (Registrar at California School of Fine Arts): 1950-1978 (72 letters)
• Fuller, Mary: see McChesney, Mary
• Fuller, Patti (Ed Corbett's niece): 1955 (2 letters)
• Furse, Roger: 1928-1953 (4 letters)
• Gallery of Modern Art, Taos, N.M.: 1972 (1 letter)
• Garcia, Enos: 1954 (1 letter)
• Georgiadis, Alex: 1951 (1 letter)
• Gettell, Mrs. Richard Glenn: 1958 (an invitation to meet Col. George Lincoln)
• Gluck, Heidi: 1977 (1 letter)
• Gomez, Dorothy Massey (mother of anthropologist Bill Massey): 1950 (1 letter)
• Gomez, Joe: undated and 1971 (2 letters)
• Grant, Bob: 1953-1972 (2 letters)
• Grant, Carolyn: 1969 (1 letter)
• Great Neck Board of Education: 1960 (1 letter)
• Grimm, Marjorie: 1973 (1 letter)
• Grossmann, Nancy: 1966 (1 letter)
• Guggenheim: John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation: 1953-1954 (2 letters)
• Harwood Foundation: 1953-1956 (2 letters)
• Harris, Roger: 1973 (1 letter)
• Hawley, W. R.: 1977 (1 letter enclosing an exhibition catalog "Unemployed Wizards")
• Heischman, R. L.: undated (1 letter)
• Hill, Dorothy: 1967 (2 letters)
• Hocks, Fred: 1952 (1 letter)
• Howard, Ellen and Galen: 1957 (1 letter)
• Howard, Robert Boardman and Adaline Kent (San Francisco sculptors): 1951-1955 (2 letters)
• Howard, Madge Knight and Charles H.: 1946-1954 (21 letters)
• Hultburg, John and Lynne: 1959-1974 (5 letters)
• Huntsville Museum of Art: see Braunstein/Quay Gallery
• Hurst, Tricia: 1977 (1 letter)
• Hutchinson, Mrs. D. H.: 1925 (1 letter)
• Illinois: University of Illinois at Urbana: 1952 (2 letters)
• Jackson: Martha Jackson Gallery: 1965 (1 letter)
• Jacobson, Art (artist) and Ursula: 1950-1960 (9 letters)
• Jonson Gallery: 1969-1970 (2 letters)
• Kadish, Reuben: 1958 (1 letter)
• Kahl: Leone Kahl Gallery: 1964 (1 letter)
• Karnes, Marion Watson: undated and 1947-1954 (80 letters from Spohn)
• Keeney, James: 1963 (1 letter)
• Kieve, Rudolph: 1971 (3 letters)
• King, Vivie and Rufus: 1977 (1 letter)
• Kingman, Dong: undated calling card
• Kuhlman, Walt: 1957 (2 letters)
• Kultberg, Lynne and John: 1965 (1 letter)
• Labaudt, Lucien: 1943 (1 letter)
• Labaudt, Marcelle: 1956 (1 letter)
• Landgren, Paula: undated (1 letter)
• Lannan, J. Patrick (The Susquehanna Corporation/ The Lannan Foundation): 1966-1971 (4 letters); see Personal Business Records for correspondence pertaining to the Foundation's support of Spohn, 1961-1962
• LaPlante, John (Stanford University): 1949 (1 letter)
• Lazarus, Rosalind: 1960 (1 letter)
• LeBow-Gould Associates: 1958 (3 letters)
• Lee, Martha: 1957 (1 letter)
• Lehman, Margarett: 1957 (1 letter)
• Letter Shop: 1956 (1 letter)
• Library of Congress Copyright Office: 1932 (1 letter concerning the trisection of an arbitrary angle)
• Lippincott, Janet (artist): 1955-1956 (5 letters)
• Lockwood, Ward: 1952 (1 letter)
• MacAgy, Douglas and Betty: undated and 1945-1973 (13 letters)
• MacAgy, Jermayne (Jerry): 1945-1948 (2 letters)
- Macdowell Colony: 1975 (1 letter)
- Machcinski, Barbara: 1971 (1 letter)
- MacIntyre, Carlyle F.: 1945 (1 letter)
- Maes, Virginia: 1941 (1 letter)
- Mare, Doris and Emil: 1969 (1 letter)
- Marse, John J.: 1962 (1 letter)
- Marter, Joan: 1977 (3 letters)
- Martin, Agnes: 1958-1975 (3 letters)
- Massey, Ellen DeSelms: 1940 (2 letters)
- McCarthy, Francis Joseph (AIA): 1950 (1 change of address card)
- McChesney, Mary (Fuller) and Mac: 1952-1977 (62 letters, including one dated May 21, 1968 decorated with a lizard skin, one dated Jun 08, 1973 enclosing a wooden Yalalag Indian good luck charm, and one dated May 26, 1976 enclosing a photograph of group and McChesney art work at Temko mansion in Berkeley)
- McCormick, Herbert: 1951 (1 letter)
- McDonald, Katharyn: 1963-1964 (2 letters)
- Merlin Development Company: 1962 (1 letter)
- Merrick, Barbara: 1975 (1 letter)
- Meyer, Fleur Cowler: 1968 (1 letter)
- Miller, Dorothy (Museum of Modern Art): 1952-1977 (8 letters)
- Moore Dry Dock Company: 1942 (2 letters)
- Murphy, Jack W. and Dori (owners of some of Spohn's work): 1951-1976 (7 letters)
- Mygatt, Tony: 1954 (1 letter)
- National Collection of Fine Arts: 1977 (1 letter)
- New Mexico Highlands University: 1958-1969 (3 letters)
- New Mexico: Museum of New Mexico Art Gallery: 1952-1957 (3 letters)
- New Mexico: University of New Mexico at Albuquerque: 1957-1970 (2 letters)
- New York City Transit Authority: 1962-1963 (2 letters)
- New York Saucer Information Bureau: 1962-1965 (2 letters)
- New York University: 1958-1960 (3 letters)
- O'Connor, Francis V.: 1979 (1 letter)
- Ohio State University: 1958 (1 letter)
- Oldfield, Otis: 1942 (1 letter of recommendation for Spohn for Albert M. Bender Grants-in-Aid)
- Olmsted, Frederick: 1943 (1 letter)
- Ortman, George: 1964 (2 letters)
- Otto, Curtis, Roberta, and Adrienne: 1957 (1 letter)
- Oxford University Press: 1949 (1 letter)
- Parrett, Fred C.: undated and 1954 (2 letters)
- Peale, Norman Vincent (office of): 1975 (1 letter)
- Pepsi-Cola Annual Art Competition: 1947 (2 letters)
- Peterson, Arline? and Pete: 1955-1957 (2 letters)
- Petrovo, Miriam: 1961-1971 (11 letters)
- Pitney, Peggy and Ed: 1948 (1 letter)
- Queens College: 1958 (2 letters)
- Ramsay, Anna R.: 1954 (1 letter)
- Remington, Deborah: 1963 (1 letter)
- Reminick, Harry: 1954 (1 letter)
- Reynal, Jeanne: 1941 (an invitation to a reception for Arshile Gorky) and 1952 (1 letter)
- Ribak, Louis and Bea: 1954-1976 (5 letters)
Richards, Tally: 1971-1980 (5 letters)
• Ridiman, Bob: 1963-1970 (4 letters)
• Rogoway, Marjorie and Rog: undated and 1953-1968 (15 letters)
• Rosebury, Amy and Ted: 1954 (1 letter)
• Rosen, Michael: 1970-1974 (4 letters)
• Roswell Museum and Art Center: 1977-1978 (6 letters)
• Rothko Foundation: 1971-1975 (4 letters)
• Rothko, Mark and Mell: 1946-1958 (8 letters)
• Rusnell, Wesley: 1972-1979 (13 letters)
• Sachs Gallery: undated and 1968 (2 letters)
• St. John's College: 1969 (1 letter)
• Salzer, Oscar: 1955 (1 letter)
• Sanders, Una and John: 1975-1977 (6 letters)
• Sands, Louis: 1948 (1 letter)
• San Francisco Art Association: 1939-1955 (19 letters)
• San Francisco Museum of Art: 1949-1977 (18 letters)
• Saxe, Suzanne: 1972-1973 (2 letters)
• Scarpitta, Pat and Sal: 1968 (1 letter)
• Schneiderwirth, Joan (friend of Ed Corbett): 1955 (1 letter)
• School of Visual Arts: 1964-1970 (86 letters)
• Schubart, Pauline: 1950 (1 letter)
• Shoemaker, Peter (former student of Spohn): 1955-1958 (5 letters)
• Shiras, Mary: 1958-1965 (10 letters)
• Sihvonen, Oli: 1953-1977 (66 letters)
• Slivka, David: 1954 (1 letter)
• Smith, Hassel: 1948 (1 letter)
• Spooner, John: 1965-1977 (10 letters)
• Stables Art Gallery (Leone Kahl, director): 1956-1965 (14 letters)
• Stanford University: 1946 (1 letter)
• Stephens, Dick and Carolyn: 1960-1965 (3 letters)
• Stevens: Arthur Stevens Book Club: 1968 (1 letter)
• Still, Clyfford: 1948-1968 (28 letters, including one dated Nov 1950 to Ed Corbett, and one dated Nov 29, 1963 enclosing a hand-drawn map to Still's home)
• Strehler, Allen (Sociologist): 1954 (1 letter)
• Summers, Al: 1952 (1 letter)
• Sutcliffe, Jennifer (beautiful English girl who passed through Taos with Ann Cumming): 1956 (2 letters)
• Szajderman, Marius: 1967 (1 letter)
• Taggart, Bill, Sandy, and Sean: 1968 (1 letter)
• Taos Artist's Association (Taos Art Association): 1956-1964 (6 letters)
• Taos Realty: 1968-1969 (3 letters)
• Tatarsky, Hy and Muriel: 1952-1957 (2 letters)
• Tatarsky, Stephanie: 1963-1964 (7 letters)
• Taylor, Gene: 1925 (letter of introduction to Erskine Gwynne)
• Temianka, Henri: 1941 (1 letter)
• Tensan, Keith and Gene: 1957 (1 letter)
• Terrain Gallery: 1960 (1 letter)
• Terry Art Institute: 1951-1952 (7 letters)
• Third Street Gallery (Helen Kaye, Director): 1950 (1 letter)
• Thomas, Corine (owner of a Spohn painting): 1954-1957 (7 letters)
• Tirana, Rosamond: undated and 1958-1962 (10 letters); see Corbett, Edward for additional letters
• Van Duren, Allan and Betsy: 1953 (1 letter)
• Van Ingen, Pat: 1973 (2 letters)
• Varda, Yantoo?: 1949 (1 letter)
• Visual Arts Gallery: 1967 (2 letters)
• Vollmer, George A.: 1945-1948 (3 letters)
• Von Herberg, Charlotte: 1950-1958 (2 letters)
• Wakefield, Ruth Cravath: 1943 (1 letter of recommendation for Spohn)
• Wandell, Walt and Doreen: 1958 (1 letter)
• Wasley, Emily (aunt) and Sarah Rhoads (cousin): 1946-1955 (14 letters)
• Wehrer, Anne: 1974 (1 letter)
• Whaley, Bill: 1974 (1 letter)
• White, Minor: 1963 (1 letter)
• Who's Who In The Midwest: 1959 (1 letter)
• Who's Who In The West: 1959 (1 letter)
• Willard, Charlotte: 1960-1967 (3 letters)
• Williams, Matilda A.: 1958 (1 letter)
• Wilmans, Margery and Steve: 1974 (1 letter)
• Winston, James W.: 1941 (1 letter)
• Wise: Howard Wise Gallery: 1962 (1 letter)
• Woelffer, Emerson and Diana: 1955-1958 (5 letters)
• Wood, Ralph: 1960-1970 (5 letters)
• Wright, Dorothy: 1926 (1 letter)
• Wurlitzer: Helene Wurlitzer Foundation: 1954-1957 (3 letters)
• Young-Hunter, Mrs. John: 1959 (1 letter)

Available Correspondence is on reels 5461-5470.

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<td>Box 4, Folder 7-30</td>
<td>Correspondence, February 1-10, 1970-April 21-30, 1971</td>
<td>Notes: Reel 5466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 4, Folder 31-55</td>
<td>Correspondence, April 21-30, 1971-January 1-19, 1973</td>
<td>Notes: Reel 5467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Series 2: Clay Spohn Papers

#### 2.3: Business Records, 1890-1983

*(boxes 6-7, 1.6 linear feet)*

**Scope and Contents:** Business records primarily consist of Spohn's general accounting records, account books, banking records, contracts, inventories of artwork sold, records of support from the Lannan Foundation, records concerning Spohn's house in Taos, and miscellaneous receipts for healthcare, travel, art supplies, photographic services, and shipping. This subseries also includes documents concerning the companies managed by Spohn's father, John H. Spohn, and the patents and estate papers of Spohn's brother, John H. Spohn, Jr. These can be found at the beginning of the subseries.

**Available Formats:** Business records are unfilmed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 6, Folder 1</th>
<th>John H. Spohn, 1890-1928</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 2-4</td>
<td>John H. Spohn, Jr., 1940-1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 5-7</td>
<td>General Accounts, 1950-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 8-25</td>
<td>Account Books, 1932-1976 (18 books)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 26-53</td>
<td>Banking Records, 1943-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 54</td>
<td>Contract and Financial Records (mural on Bob's Fine Food restaurant), 1945-1946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 55</td>
<td>Contract and Consignment Records for The Little Gallery, Taos, NM, 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 56</td>
<td>Inventory of Artwork in the Estate of Clay Spohn, 1981-1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 6, Folder 57-59</td>
<td>Records of Artwork Sold, 1941-1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 7, Folder 1-6</td>
<td>Records of Support from the Lannan Foundation, 1961-1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 7, Folder 7</td>
<td>Records of Stocks, 1939-1969</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4: Notes and Writings, 1924-1985, undated  
(*boxes 7-18, 10.8 linear feet*)

**Scope and Contents:** This subseries contains miscellaneous notes and writings and includes 188 notebooks, address lists, a card file of book titles, Spohn's "Subject Location," "Index and Date," and "School of Visual Arts" files, and two typescripts by other writers. The miscellaneous notes and writings, and the notebooks, are concerned with various topics, often intermingled, such as teaching notes; lists of names, books, and groceries needed; financial records for art supplies; Spohn's thoughts on philosophy and art; dietary advice; annotated studies and calculations concerning the "trisection of an arbitrary angle"; notes for his unpublished literary work "The Book," (sometimes entitled "The Actual Book" or "The Truth Book"); and brief and incomplete drafts written either for writing class assignments or for "The Book."

Files on the School of Visual Arts contains class schedules, grade sheets, and 37 notebooks of class assignments, records of student grades, notes for lectures, lists of books for teaching, writings about teaching, and notes on art supplies for class.

**Available Formats:** Notes and writings are unfilmed unless noted otherwise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Insurance, 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9-14</td>
<td>Spohn's House in Taos, 1952-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>Receipts, 1933-1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>25-57</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Notes and Writings, 1924-1985, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1-56</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Notes and Writings, 1951-1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1-57</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Notes and Writings, 1959-June, 1962</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>1-62</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Notes and Writings, July, 1962-May, 1970</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1-47</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Notes and Writings, June, 1970-1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>48-63</td>
<td>Notebooks 1-21, 1926-1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-48</td>
<td>Notebooks 22-76, 1927-1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1-29</td>
<td>Notebooks 77-105, 1962-1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>Notebooks 137-163, 1968-1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-19</td>
<td>Notebooks 164-182, 1973-1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Notebooks 183-188, 1976-1977</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Box 17, Folder 7 | Address Lists, undated  
Notes: Reel 5470 |
| Box 17, Folder 8-12 | Card File of Book Titles, 1959-1976  
Notes: Reel 5470 |
| Box 17, Folder 13 | Spohn's "Subject Location File", 1960-1961  
Notes: Reel 5470 |
| Box 17, Folder 14-19 | Spohn's "Index and Date File," 1960-1961  
Notes: Reel 5471 |
| Box 17, Folder 20-22 | Notes from Private Trade School Teacher's Course at N.Y.U., 1965  
Notes: Reel 5471 |
| Box 17, Folder 23-33 | School of Visual Arts Notebook, 1964-1970  
Notes: Reel 5471 |
| Box 18, Folder 1-12 | School of Visual Arts Notebook, cont., 1964-1970  
Notes: Reel 5471 |
| Box 18, Folder 13-14 | Engagement Calendars, 1965, 1976 |
| Box 18, Folder 15 | Typescript, "The Sickness of American Culture" by Reinhold Niebuhr, undated |
| Box 18, Folder 16 | Typescript, "Clay Spohn's Museum" by Douglas Macagy, 1965? |

**2.5: Artwork, 1926-1968, undated**

*(boxes 18, 22, and OV 23, 0.6 linear feet)*

**Scope and Contents:** Artwork consists of 557 drawings, including 27 undated drawings of Washington D.C., and 14 sketchbooks.

**Available Formats:** Artwork is on reel 5472.

| Box 18, Folder 17-38 | Drawings (see also box 22 and OV 23), 1926-1968, undated |
| Box 18, Folder 39-48 | Sketchbooks (see also box 22), 1925-1939 |
| Box 22, Folder 1 | Oversized Drawings , 1926-1968, undated |
| Box 22, Folder 2 | Oversized Sketchbooks , 1925-1939 |
| Box OV 23 | Oversized Drawings , 1926-1968, undated |
### 2.6: Printed Material, 1894-1977, undated

*(boxes 18-19, 1.5 linear feet)*

**Scope and Contents:**
Printed material consists of clippings, exhibition announcements and catalogs for Spohn and others, exhibition prospectuses, reproductions of artwork, calendars of events, programs, brochures, books, and miscellaneous printed material.

**Available Formats:**
Printed materials are on reels 5472-5474.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 18, Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49-51</td>
<td>Clippings, 1930-1939, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52-68</td>
<td>Clippings, 1941-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>Clippings, 1964-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs for Spohn, 1939-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-17</td>
<td>Exhibition Announcements and Catalogs for Others, 1940-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Exhibition Prospectuses, 1945-1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Reproductions of Artwork, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Calendars of events, 1965-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Programs, 1965-1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning Taos Artists, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-24</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning the School of Visual Arts, 1965-1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning Miscellaneous Schools, 1949-1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning the Oakland Museum, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-29</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning Art Supplies, 1956-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning Books, 1969, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>Brochures Concerning Health, 1958-1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Miscellaneous brochures, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Book, Riverside Recipes, 1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 19, Folder 38</td>
<td>Book, A Poet's Breath, by Judson Crews, 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 19, Folder 39</td>
<td>Book, Painting and Sculpture, Published by the San Francisco Art Association, 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 19, Folder 40</td>
<td>Book, Applied Teaching Techniques by Gilbert Weaver and Louis Cenci, 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 19, Folder 41</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Printed Material, 1940-1958</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7: Photographs, circa 1862-1977, undated

(boxes 20-22, 0.5 linear feet)

Scope and Contents:
Photographs are of Spohn and his family, colleagues, studio, house in Taos, exhibition installations, and artwork. There are also photographs of San Francisco, including six views of damage done by the 1906 earthquake. Colleagues pictured in the photographs include Marion Karnes, Urban Neininger, Jeanne Reynal, Louis Ribak, Alfred Rogoway, and Maurice Sievan.

Photographs of artwork for projects by Spohn picture the following: an entrance hall mural for Officers Club, San Francisco (undated); a cartoon for copper repoussé sculpture for Carmel, California, Volunteer Fire Department (1936); a cartoon for copper repoussé sculpture for Castro Valley Community Center (1937); a mural for Montebello, California, post office (1938); and a mural for Los Gatos Union High School (1939).

Available Formats:
Photographs are on reel 5474.

<p>| Box 20, Folder 1-2 | Spohn with Family Members, 1900-circa 1915 |
| Box 20, Folder 3-6 | Clay Spohn (see also box 22), circa 1916-1974 |
| Box 20 | Family Members |
| Box 20, Folder 7 | Spohn's Paternal Grandfather, [circa 1862] (ambrotype) |
| Box 20, Folder 8 | Spohn's Grandmother, undated |
| Box 20, Folder 9 | Spohn's Mother (see also box 22), undated |
| Box 20, Folder 10-12 | Spohn's Father, circa 1890-1920 (including 7 tintypes) |
| Box 20, Folder 13-14 | Spohn's Parents, circa 1910s-1920s |
| Box 20, Folder 15-17 | Spohn's Brother and Friends, circa 1910-1940 |
| Box 20, Folder 18-20 | Family Friends, circa 1910-1920s |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 20, Folder 21</th>
<th>Bell Moose Convention, 1917</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 20, Folder 22</td>
<td>Spohn's Colleagues, 1944-1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 20, Folder 23-24</td>
<td>Spohn's Childhood Home, circa 1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 20, Folder 25</td>
<td>San Francisco Earthquake Damage, 1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 1</td>
<td>From World War I, 1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 2</td>
<td>Views of San Francisco, 1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 3-5</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Travel Photographs, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 6-8</td>
<td>Spohn's House in Taos, 1952-1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 9</td>
<td>Spohn's studio, 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 10</td>
<td>Exhibition Installations, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 11-13</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Artworks by Spohn (see also box 22), 1936-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 14</td>
<td>Projects, Entrance Hall Mural for Officers Club, San Francisco, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 15</td>
<td>Projects, Cartoon for Copper Repousee Sculpture for Carmel, California, Volunteer Fire Department, 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 16</td>
<td>Projects, Cartoon for Copper Repousee Sculpture for Castro Valley Community Center, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 17</td>
<td>Projects, Mural for Montebello, California, Post Office, 1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 18</td>
<td>Projects, Mural for Los Gatos Union High School, 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 21, Folder 19</td>
<td>Photograph of a Painting Number 10 by Mark Rothko, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 22, Folder 3</td>
<td>Oversized Photographs of Spohn, Family, and Artwork, 1916-1977, undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.8: Artifacts, undated

*(box 21, 1 folder)*

**Scope and Contents:** Artifacts consist of four military pins from Marion Karnes.

**Available Formats:** Artifacts are unfilmed.
Box 21, Folder 20  Military pins from Marion Karnes, undated

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Series 3: Addition to the Clay Spohn Papers, 1958-1977

0.4 Linear feet (box 24)

Scope and Contents: The addition includes nine notebooks of notes and writings on art, class assignments, telephone calls and appointments, plans and procedures, an index for the history and location of paintings, and financial records.

Available Formats: The addition is unfilmed.

| Box 24, Folder 1 | Notebook, Thoughts on Art, 1958 |
| Box 24, Folder 2 | Notebook, Art Notes, 1958 |
| Box 24, Folder 3 | Notebook, Plan and Procedure for One's Work, 1963 |
| Box 24, Folder 4 | Notebook, Telephone Records, Appointments, and Notes, 1969 |
| Box 24, Folder 5 | Notebook, Notes for The Real Book, 1969 |
| Box 24, Folder 6 | Notebook, Personal Notes, 1974 |
| Box 24, Folder 7 | Notebook, Class Assignments, 1977 |
| Box 24, Folder 8 | Notebook, Index of History and Location of Paintings, 1964-1965 |
| Box 24, Folder 9 | Notebook, Financial Records, 1973-1975 |

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